DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 423 177 SO 028 579

AUTHOR Dmitriyev, Gregory
TITLE Russian Youth in the Transition Period toward the Free Market Economy--1990-1993.
PUB DATE 1997-00-00
NOTE 33p.
PUB TYPE Reports - Research (143)
EDRS PRICE MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Capitalism; Change; Communism; Competition; Economics; Foreign Countries; *Free Enterprise System; Freedom; Grade 11; High Schools; *Social Change; Social Science Research
IDENTIFIERS *Russia

ABSTRACT

This paper examines the changes in aspirations and mentality of young people in Russia as to their expectations of what the market system can bring into their life. The study was done in Moscow and in Khabarovsk (Far East). Surveys of 11th-graders were conducted to gain their perspectives about the term "market" and what the future holds for them in the time of change. The paper presents the historic overview of the fall of Communism and the ideological, psychological, and social changes that also occurred. Although most Russians noted the difficulty of the changing times, they responded that the free market as they experienced it was an improvement and looked forward to better days. (Contains 26 references.) (EH)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED 423 177

Russian Youth in the Transition Period Toward the Free Market Economy - 1990-1993.

by Gregory Dmitriyev

SO 028 579

Published: 1997

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE AND DISSEMINATE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

Gregory Dmitriyev

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

1

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

✓ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

RUSSIAN YOUTH IN THE TRANSITION PERIOD TOWARD THE FREE MARKET ECONOMY

/1990-1993/

Gregory Dmitriev
Georgia Southern University (USA)

My personal experience in the preparation for the world of labor in the schools of the former Soviet Union started in the second half of the 1950s when Nikita Khrushev, the then First Secretary of the Communist Party of the USSR put forward one more propaganda slogan in the long range of useless efforts of Communist system to make it function effectively: "We will catch up and surpass over the United States of America in the production of agricultural goods per capita." In 1958, to fulfill the orders of the Communist Party Central Committee, the Supreme Soviet (The USSR Parliament) passed a law "Ob Ukreplenii Svyazi Shkoly s Zhizniyu i o Dal'neishem Razvitii Sistemy Narodnogo Obrazovaniya v SSSR" ("On Strengthening the Relation of the School With Life and on Further Development of the System of Public Education in the USSR"). In accordance with this law and with the existing government planned economic system, the elementary school which I attended at that time received isntructions to contribute to the economic competition with the USA by growing about a hundred rabbits for the local collective farm. I was given two of them to take care of in addition to my academic duties. But, either my two furry creatures which I was given to feed did not understand the "importance" of ideological guidelines of the Communist Party and did not want to compete with the capitalist American Bunnies for some "biological solidarity," or the school was not provided with nutrition for the animals, or our

knowledge and the knowledge of our teachers about these animals was not enough, anyway, the rabbits did not want not only to surpass but even to catch up with their American brothers in weight and growth. Naturally, quite soon many of them unfortunately died and the remaining were given back to the collective farm. The country had once again witnessed the failure of the ideological campaign. This sad experiment to great extent left an impression in me for the long period of my life that anything related to the economy was worthless doing it. My personal experience both as a school and a college student and later as a teacher in the Soviet schools helped me to make a conclusion that education of young people for the world of work based on ideological and political guidelines rather than on the economic demands would not be fruitful both for the individual and the society. The recent collapse of the socialist economy in the former USSR turns out to be a convincing argument.

In the 1960s and later the Communist Party and the USSR's legislative bodies passed numerous laws, instructions and guidelines on the "improvement of teaching school students for the world of work" (O merah . . . , 1966; O zavershenii . . ., 1972; O dal'neishem . . ., 1977) but they did not work, even if they were sometimes elaborated by the Central Committee in cooperation with the prominent educators and other intellectuals of the country. The laws did not work because the centrally planned economy provided no motivational incentives-material, financial- for the young people to enter the world of labor, especially the world of physical labor where the salaries were low and the technologies were primitive. In the 1970s and 1980s two vocational areas might be considered to have been an exception: military

and trade. Both of them offered better advantages. The military, or "closed" plants in the Soviet terminology, comprised over fifty percent of all industrial enterprises thus taking the majority of the school graduates who chose the industrial workers' careers. The school graduates preferred to apply to the educational institutions directly connected with the military industrial complex which guaranteed them higher monthly allowances, higher salaries after graduation and other fringe benefits.

The trade system gave an opportunity to work in a shop, in the products' distribution system, or in a food service where an employee had an access to the goods which were in scarce supply in the state stores, and instead of selling them in the shop at a fixed price, one could hide and sell them illegally on the "black market" at a higher price, thus making profit and better living. The professions of a shop assistant or a waiter in a restaurant were among the most prestigious in the country for many young people. On the countrary, the career of an engineer was among the least preferred by them because of the low salary. The competition for the admission to the trade (especially trade with foreign countries) and service schools and institutes was always very tough. Quite often it was the bribes, personal connections of the applicants' parents, or their belonging to the Komsomol and Party elite that ranked higher than the entrance examination results at the final stage of the decision making about whom to grant the status of a student.

Many Soviet young people were not interested in joining the world of labor also due to the fact that the government planned economy did not remunerate an individual for his/her hard efforts while the so called "social security from cradle to

grave" provided the members of the society with such amount of commodities and services (free education, free medical care, etc.) which secured neither high nor absolutely low level of living . As one of my friends joked, "The system will not let you starve but it will not let you put on weight, either."

A young person did not need to worry about his/her future job because there was no unemployment in the country which was always propagandized as a gain of socialism but actually its absence was a result of low automatic level of the economy and of the psuedocare about an individual who could miss his/her job for many days or even weeks and still could not be fired because of the high trade union protection. "Do you mean to say to the West that socialism has unemployment," -a Party watchdog would threaten a director of the plant who wanted to fire a lazy and alcoholic worker. But, even if fired, he/she could easily find a similar job. Of course, such state of things, it morally perverted youngsters who knew that they would get a job in any case and the responsibility for a good job would not be asked from them.

* * *

The school in the economic plans of the Communist Party played an important role as a main channel of labor force training. In addition to the general education, the Party determined three main functions of it with respect to preparing students for the life after schooling. The schools were to implement "trudovoye obuchenie" (labor education), "trudovoye vospitaniye" (labor upbringing), and "politechnicheskoye obrazovaniye" (politechnical education).

Trudovoye obuchenye (labor education) to great extend included what is

generally understood as vocational education and was it aimed at teaching specific knowledge and skills in a particular working area. It consisted of courses in home economics for girls; carpentry and working with wood for boys in the elementary school; courses in electrical work, radio electronics, telephone system, agriculture, and others in the middle and upper classes. The labor education in the elementary classes took the form of the so called the "Lesson of labor" which was always critized by many educators for its narrow focus on a limited amount of working skills and the use of copying methods prescribed by the official instructions and quidelines of the Ministry of Education. However, some creative and courageous teachers dared to violate the official instructions and guidelines running sometimes into the risk of being fired. They viewed the curriculum and the textbooks not as the only sourse of knowledge which was needed to be memorized and drilled by students but as a means to develop students holistically. When changes in education began in the 1980s these educators-innovators, as they called themselves, were the first ones to challenge the schooling based on the Communist ideology and tried to make it more child-centered, creative, interesting, and relevant to children. For example, I. Volkov (1990), a teacher-innovator from Reutovo, a city close to Moscow, changed the name of the "Lesson of labor" into the "Creativity class" setting the goals of widening the variety of labor activities, developing intellectual flexibility, relating what is studied in the classroom to childrens' life, etc.

The selection of the curriculum content for the labor education in upper grades had more vocational emphasis and was determined on the basis of local branches of industry or agriculture.

Trudovoye vospitaniye (labor upbringing) unlike the labor education played the biggest and the worst role in instilling into students the Communist outlook towards work, job, economic relations, distorting and destroying the economic mentality of students, and drawing the false pictures about the economic situation in the Western countries. There were no special lessons for it but the school policy of the ruling Party and the guidelines of the Ministry of Education demanded to integrate it not only with labor education but with every academic subject and out-of-class activities. The guidelines included as goals teaching students that to work for personal benefit is bad and selfish and to work for the sake of the society, for the cause of "the bright Communist future" is very positive. They demanded to teach that the capitalist economy depersonalizes individuals, turns them into the cogs of the machine since the means of production belong to a few and vice a versa the socialist economy in which all means of production belong to the society (in accordance with the theory of Communism and to the government in reality) makes a person feel happy. The labor upbringing was a reflection of what R. Daniels calls "a historically unique system of relations of production which conformed neither to the production relations of capitalism, geared to the creation of surplus value, nor to those of socialism, where the associated producers collectively determine the purposes to which they will put their labor and the methods by which they will carry it out. In the USSR, the associated producers did not and do not have any positive control over the organization of the society. Goals are set by the elite, including what is produced and how. The fact that these goals are rarely met arises from the elite's loss of control over the actions of managers and workers

alike, each of whom distorts central instructions to their own purposes" (Daniels, 1990).

The situation when the means of production belonged to nobody but to the government had a very negative impact upon the moral and labor ethics of young people who observed stealing, cheating, bad work and irresponsibility of the adults. The younger generations were actually the victims of the Communist system which deprived an individual of the property and created a theory and a practice of collectivism. In accordance with it, as the major advocate of collectivism N. K. Krupskaya wrote in her letter "Mine" and "Ours" to the pioneers, young guardians of the Communist Party, that the children should not think about their individual interest, needs, careers, well-being but rather those of the society (N. Krupskaya, 1932).

The individual inspirations, private property were condemned by the Communist pedagogy and teachers. The condemnation was integrated into both "overt" (subjects) and "hidden" (Moral Code of the Communism Buildder, etc.) the curriculum materials. For example, the content of the tasks and problems in the Math textbook for the fifth grade (Vilenkin, 1988) which I analyzed teaches the values related to socialist or collective forms of production. There is nothing said about the individual's savings, profits, business, etc. A person who wants to have property was accused of being a bourgeois "sobstvennik" (ownership-seeker).

Most of the free-market related terminology in Social Studies (Obshchestvovedenie) were taught with the negative, biased connotation. For example, the word "businessman" was related only to the Western economy and

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

usually accompanied by a picture of a fat man with a cigar in his mouth. And a worker in the Western society was portrayed as meager, underfed, and poor. A word "career" used before 1917 Bolshevik coup as a personal choice of the future profession, under the Communist regime was given the derogatory meaning: a student who thinks and talks about his/her future profession other than that of a farmer and/or a worker was to be portrayed by teachers and curriculum as a "karyerist" (a selfish career-seeker who does not care about the service to the society).

Politekhnicheskoye obrazovaniye (politechnical education). The Communist pedagogy developed the theory of it basing on Karl Marx's idea of fusing teaching the basics of economy, specific labor techniques, and the attitude of socially useful technical labor (Gutek, 1993). The history of the Soviet education shows constant debates and fights around politechnism, as well as both ups and downs in the practical implementation of the politechnical education. I would share opinions of some researchers that at certain periods of the XXth century it helped "to reduce the gap that existed between intellectual and physical work" (Gutek, 1993). But most of the time, it followed the political agenda of the Communist Party, and either became too academic (1960s and 1970s) when politechnism was a part of a program of training more engineers and theoreticians for military purposes, or simply vocational (1930s and 1940s) as the Party's policy of Industrialization dictated. With the break of the centralized government and economic systems, the fate of the politechnical education becomes unclear. I think the probability of a growing gap between academic and vocational education might be again higher because schools

are getting more and more oriented toward the market needs. At least at the present stage of the transition.

* * *

The first changes in the preparation of the young people toward the world outside the high school in general, and toward the world of labor, in particular, were initiated by a new General Secretary of the Communist Party Y. Andropov in 1983, although the necessity for them was understood by public long before that. But the sick and old General Secretary Leonid Brezhnev did not want and could not bring any reforms in the country thus causing stagnation in economy, education, social life, etc. "Let me die quietly," he used to say at the Politbureau meetings when someone proposed any change. The people were dissatisfied with the growing cynicism of the youth and their negative moral values, unpreparedness, and the lack of desire to join the world of work. Besides, the 10-year mandatory for everybody secondary education, being academically overloaded, oriented all school students mostly toward institutions of higher learning. The societal climate was not in favor of many blue collar professions.

The actual reform of education started in 1984 and introduced more choices for schools and students (The Main Guidelines..., 1984). It reduced the academism of the secondary school which was welcomed by teachers, students, and parents because it met the diverse needs and interests of students in a better way. Another attempt of the reform aimed at reducing the gap between the school and the world of work was to merge the general and vocational education in secondary schools and reinstate the graduation exam in vocational education practiced in the 1960s.

But the law did not work and it was hardly ever implemented in some areas of the Soviet Union because of the change of the political leadership in the country which introduced radically new imperatives to the society and the schools.

In 1985 Y. Andropov's initiative was continued by his successor M. Gorbachev as the General Secretary of the Communist Party. M. Gorbachev together with A. Yakovlev, E. Shevardnadze launched the program of *perestroika* aiming at building socialism "with a human face." "Perestroika" was meant to be a radical agenda of restructuring the stagnated and falling apart government controlled economy and building new relations between education, youth, and economy. There were not so many young people who believed in perestroika on its first stages because the nation as a whole was totally disappointed with the previous promises of the Communist leaders to "surpass America" in living standards which never came true. So perestroika was viewed by many disillusioned with the Party's ability to make things better as nothing more than an extra Communist propaganda trick. To the disillusionment no less important factor was the time -70 years of Communist regime- which proved the unefficiency of central planning in economy by a small elite group of people at the top of the Party hierarchy. Besides the fathers of perestroika, as they admitted later (A. Yakovlev, 1992), did not have a clear picture in what direction they were going to restructure economy and the society. But as soon as the elements of new economic structures emerged, the attitude of young people toward perestroika in economy started gradually to change, too. One of the first forms close to the market type economy in the second half of the 1980s were "cooperatives" which appeared in the country after the law permitting small group

private enterprises was passed in 1988. Soon after another form was allowed - "maliye predpriyatiya" ("small enterprises") which were similar to "cooperatives." The political struggle around these new forms was very rigorous between the Communist hardliners and liberal Communists (Smith, H., 1991). Nevertheless, the new free-market forms survived and economically have been a relative success. Many researchers of the Soviet youth of that time (Smith, H., 1991, Adelman, D., 1992) tend to believe that young people welcomed new economy and were ready to be actively involved into it. Basing on my personal observations and talks with young people in Moscow where I worked at that time I would think that for many of them it was unusual and quite difficult to drastically change their careers, life styles, and mentality and adjust themselves even to these small economic changes. Many of them were not advised to join the cooperatives and "small enterprises" by their parents and relatives who still remembered Stalin's reaction to the owners of private property who one day were deprived of all their wealth. So, the decision to wait and see was not rare among the youth.

* * *

The school turned out to be one of the first social institutions to be reformed on the eve and at the initial phases of perestroika. Before the 1984 school reform, there were three basic institutions of secondary education which provided the Soviet youth with labor education, labor upbringing, and polytechnical education:

1. The secondary general and polytechnical school with labor education (3+5+2) was designed to teach academics and labor education. As for the latter, in 1970s and 1980s it was not mandatory for high school students to take a graduation

exam for a job certificate as it was in the 1960s when I took a rather serious test for the profession of an agricultural specialist. As I mentioned previously, by the time of perestroika, the vocational education was already a step-daughter in general secondary schools.

2. The secondary professional and technical school admitted the graduates of a 8-year incomplete secondary school for the period of education ranging from 2 to 3 years and after a 10 year complete secondary school for 1-2 years. This type of school also included general education curriculum thus giving the possibility and right to its graduates to apply to any institution of higher learning.

3. The specialized technical school (3-4 years after an incomplete secondary school, or 2 years after a complete secondary school) was designed to train specialists of higher qualification than those in the secondary professional technical schools. Its graduates could be admitted to the 2nd year in the University of Institute. This type of an institution was less criticized during the reform times for it gave a serious, balanced and advanced general and secondary education.

The disintegration of the Soviet Union brought new structural changes into the Russia's school system. The Statute 11 of the new Law on education stipulates that the structure of the educational institutions can be developed locally likewise the schools themselves can be established by individuals, local authorities, religious organizations, corporations (The Law..., 1993). The above mentioned institutions remain the major ones although they also have undergone substantial changes which can be briefly summarized as following:

1. The secondary general and politechnical school with labor education

changed its pattern to 4+5+2 thus adding one more year of study. Now it does not provide vocational education for all students any more. The upper grades, 10 and 11, have been differentiated into profiles (mathematical, language, biological, applied science, technological, etc.). The profiles of the school can be jointly chosen by parents, students, teachers, and local authorities.

2. The secondary professional and technical school reduced the length of study by one year by eliminating the general education part of the curriculum. So, now its graduates have to take a one year general education program of the general and polytechnical school if they want to enter an institution of higher learning.

3. The specialized technical schools basically preserved the old structure.

There were two more new types of secondary educational institutions added to the educational system which enjoy popularity among parents and children:

1. A gymnasium with the revived pre-Communist era goal of liberal arts education.

2. A lyceum which provides vocational and general education. Unlike the professional vocational schools of old type a lyceum develops its vocational curriculum on politechnical theory rather than teaching specific profession.

* * *

The perestroika time was over with the collapse of the Communist system in August of 1991 what marked the more rapid movement of the newly formed independent Russia toward the free-market economic system. The movement was accelerated by abolishing the Party control and adopting laws on privatization, foreign investments, etc. The new Law of the Russian Federation on Education

passed in 1993 reflected most of the imperatives of a growing democracy and an emerging market economy. The principles of the new state educational policy in the Law were developed along the lines of humanization and democratization of the education system; of allowing private educational institutions; greater autonomy for schools and sharing power with teachers, students, and parents; creating greater variety of schooling including an alternative one. In accordance with the Law an individual got more opportunities to choose the career he/she want to pursue; educational institutions can be established not only by state structure but private sector, public organizations and churches; the secondary school became more flexible in determining the correlation between general and vocational education. The new law encouraged teachers, students, parents, and businesses to search for the new forms of cooperation and partnership.

The program of radical economic reforms was not and is not equally and unanimously accepted by all people in Russian society. The transition of the country toward a free market economy is among the hottest debated issues not only among political forces in the society but among school and university students too. The survey (Sobkin V. and Pissarsky, P., 1992) of several hundred Moscow high school students made in the fall of 1992 by the Laboratory of Sociology of Education of the Russian Republican Center of Sociology of Education shows that 53 percent of all surveyed students initiate the discussion of the economic situation in the country with their teachers and parents. Then follow other issues: political situation in the country, nationalities, religion, school problems and sex.

The novelty of market economic relations, the radicality and the amount of

changes in all spheres of life paint a diverse picture of youth's attitudes to new economy but at the same time it clearly shows that many young people have already accepted the idea of the market economy and rather quicker than the older generations. In May, 1993 at my request my sister Valentina Dmitriyeva, a teacher of Mathematics interviewed her 11th graders, the seniors of the secondary school no. 55 located in a middle class community of the city of Khabarovsk. The 700-thousand city lies 5,000 miles to the east of Moscow and is typical to many other cities in Russia. One of the main questions was aimed at finding out how the graduating students understand the concept of a free-market. It is very important to know because for many Russian people the word "market" was often associated with the flea market or farmers' market--the only ones allowed under the Communist regime and the prices in the farmers' markets were always higher than in the state shops. For the majority of the surveyed students it is associated with such notions as "private property and the right to sell," "competition," "free exchange of goods with foreign countries," "how stock-exchange works," "individual's initiative." "Market is not a bazaar or a flea market; it is the civilized economic relations," is an ideal for 17-year old V. Solovyov. Many students express their hopes that the market will bring prosperity for them and for the country. "Market is the time when everything is available in the country at the accessible prices," answered V. Tomin. Still 25 percent of the students found it difficult to explain the concept of the free-market and one of the explanations to it might be the novelty of the phenomenon which sometimes takes the wild forms of the early day capitalism in the West. Probably that is why some students did not approve the present day ways

of the market is functioning. "Market," Maria Glukhaya wrote, "must be honest so that the partners trust each other's words and hold them. And not like now when everybody tries to cheat each other."

The changes are noteworthy in students' career intentions. 30 percent of the students expressed their desire to continue education in market related institutions of higher learning which are new in the city - Institute of Management and Institute of People's Economy. Another 30 percent of school graduates mentioned that they would like to continue education but did not specify in what area they would like to major. An interesting physiological approach toward future career was expressed by V. Solovyov, "After graduating from the school I would like to start in some business (now it is not absolutely necessary to have the higher education to do it). But if I don't apply to an institute, I would be drafted to the army [the students of the higher learning institutions are exempted from the military service - G.D.] and I would not like to waste a year or two of my life at all. In the old time it was a matter of honor to serve in the army but now only idiots do that (I have some specific examples). Besides, coming back from the army it is very difficult to find a well-paid job." In Solovyov's answer I'd like to emphasize his understanding of the low value of higher education which is typical to some school students. These days Russian press is full of public concerns about the decrease of academic accomplishments and aspirations of university students.

The English language was considered by many 11th grade students as a path to success. While reading students' answers I felt sympathetic with today's teachers of this subject who don't have as many problems with motivation as I did teaching

English in the middle and upper classes of the secondary school in the 1970s and 1980s'. Living behind the Iron Curtain many students at that time were not aware of the importance of foreign languages, and did not see where they could apply them.

One of President Yeltsyn's major economic reforms in 1992-93 is the privatization of state property. It began in November, 1992, when every Russian individual - from the newly born children to the elderly people started receiving a share of state property in the form of a privatization voucher (privatizatsionnyi chek) of 10.000 roubles in value. In December, 1992, "Uchitelskaya Gazeta," the main teachers' newspaper in the country, asked six people - two teachers, two students and two parents in Moscow school no 465 to answer the question, "What do you expect to do with your voucher?" The answers reflected the situation in the country in general: some were already aware of the benefits of privatization, some were ready to sell the voucher, some were uncertain and decided to wait and see:

Nikolai Romanovski (teacher):

I need warm boots for winter. My feet are freezing. I would prefer to buy a coat, too. So, sad as it may sound, I will have to part with my voucher somewhere in the Moscow metro [the place, where the illegal black market bargaining of vouchers takes place - G.D.], giving it into the hands of a greedy bastard with pinky cheeks.

Ilya Brazhnikov (teacher):

For me this deal is done. I am going to invest my voucher into Ostankino Brewery. I would like to have more beer produced. I heard that a share of this Brewery would cost two vouchers. If our family buys some shares then it will contribute to the development of beer brewery in Russia. And probably, we will receive some profit.

Asya Maksimenko (9th-grade student):

I want to present my voucher to my favorite teacher.

Artyom Abramov (11th-grade student):

I'll put it into my desk for the time being and wait and see.

Parent (father):

Since they give it to me I will find what to do with it. Today it has no real value. To be an asset, it should be supported by money and law. So far it is lying on my shelf and gathers dust. I'll wait and see.

Parent (mother):

I cannot make up my mind. There is much information about it, but I could not choose, yet.

In the middle of 1993 the situation changed: people started getting some dividends from the invested vouchers and the privatization went on quicker. V. Chubais, the chairman of the Russian Federation Privatization Committee announced in June, 1993 that about 50 percent of small and middle size and 20 percent of big size enterprises were already privatized which is a significant achievement of the reform ("Novosti," Russian TV "Ostankino," June 23, 1993).

Russia's radical changes are making new demands on relations between school, emerging new businesses and state enterprises. In the old days many state enterprises were obligated to render material assistance to schools, offered facilities and materials for them to implement vocational education. I would not say that it always worked well but if the principals were persistent and in the school district these were big plants, especially military ones, then the schools had very generous support. Not now any more when the enterprises started functioning on the market basis. Many schools also due to the budget cuts for education have to search for other financial and material sources (Dneprov, E., 1992). This is a new type of thing for many school administrators. The English word "sponsor" came into their

use recently and became a fashion and a necessity. There is not any research on the relation between the new private businesses and schools yet, but more and more information on this issue appear in mass media. For example, in May, 1993 a Russian business-oriented newspaper "Kuranty" published an article "About one generous businessman and a girl named Lena" the author of which wrote about a new *nouveau-riche* giving money to the Moscow Department of Education for buying equipment for the city schools. Sponsoring, donating as well as the other forms of relations (subsidizing students' trips to study abroad, selling food to schools' cafeteria at a reduced price, sponsoring olympiads, etc.) are part of the school reality today, but it does not solve the problem for many schools. Usually, among the lucky ones are those in which the off-springs of the new rich class study.

The system of higher learning institutions also has to reorient its curriculum, organization, and structure to adjust them to the growing market needs. Many institutes and schools of economy were not popular among the applicants because of the low salary of its graduates. In the pre-market times the salary increased not due to the growth of profit of an enterprise but rather to the decision of the local districts' party committees. Now these institutions offer courses which are in great demand by the new type of specialist-managers, marketing specialists, brokers, investors, etc.

Among the newly started universities one can name the University of Business and Information Technologies, the Commercial University, the Technological University, the University of Economy and Finances and many others Many universities and institutes (the latter have a narrower specialization)

also opened high schools (the 10th and 11th grades) for those who want to make a career in accordance with the profile of the institution of higher learning. Some secondary schools offer optional courses for the 10th and 11th graders oriented toward specific institutions of higher learning. It's not a rare case that a school makes a decision to offer such courses as "Foundations of Market Economy" or "Business Class." Special mentioning deserve hundreds of business courses and management and marketing schools around the country founded by various private and state organizations during the last several years. These schools and courses are very popular among young people because they help them to re-educate themselves from the foundations of socialist economy to the ones of the free market. They are alsso in great need among the military people who retire earlier these days due to the reduction of the army and navy. The newly opened institutions try to include into their name the word "business" formerly criticized by the Community ideology as alien to the planned socialist economy and socialist way of life to attract the customers. Many Universities find it difficult to survive in the transition period because of the lack of money. They have to introduce tuition fees for the first time in seven decades and it becomes a barrier for some young people. For people who always had free higher education it is something difficult to handle.

Doing business is advertised by all possible means among young people. Two years ago, the newspaper "Children's Business Gazette" ("Detskaya Delovaya Gazeta") was founded in Moscow and it quickly became one of the most popular among 12-17 year olds. Recently it surveyed the teenagers' career intentions. 70% of the surveyed answered that they wanted "to be businessmen," "to start own

business," and they "are ready to work hard for it" ("Novoye Russkoye Slovo"..., 1993). The newspaper has the columns "Business-class," "The wonders of the market," "Eldorado," "Self-made-man," and others which teach students what it means to be a businessman, and how to become one.

The mass media report that similar career orientation of the school graduates exist in the big industrial Volga region. According to the sociological research done in the city of Nizhni Novgorod ("Novoye Russkoye Slovo"..., 1993) the profession of a manager is the most popular among 95.5% schoolboy-graduates and 97.8% schoolgirl-graduates. It is followed by the profession of a lawyer (84.4% and 89.4%), and a businessmen (83.3% and 87.6% correspondingly). Ten most prestigious careers are - an economist, a computer programmer, a radio-technician, a physician, a psychologist, a tradesman, and a bartender. An engineer ranks the 20th for young men and the 23rd for young ladies. Unfortunately, the professions of a teacher, a construction worker, and a policeman are today one of the most unwanted ones.

The youth of the rural areas in the transition period are caught in an unclear situation. It is connected with the position of the pro-Communist Supreme Soviet of Russia which strongly resists land privatization. That is why there is no legal basis for private land property, yet. The draft Constitution, developed by President Yeltsyn's team in May, 1993 includes the article on private property on land but it will take energetic efforts to preserve it in the final text of the Constitution which is to be adopted in the fall, 1993. Nevertheless, there appeared a new form of property in villages - several years ago leasing of land which is more profitable and young people are interested more to lease the land than to work at the state or collective

farms. In 1991 there were only 20,000 people leasing the land. By summer 1993 their number considerably increased by over 10 times. Still it's difficult to change the country people toward private farming because the 1930s Stalin's cruel collectivization killed or suppressed a desire in villagers to own the land for a long time (Conquest, R., 1986).

The issue of children's work under the age of 16 under the Communist rule was always a matter of ideological concern in the country. In accordance with the state legislation children under the age of 16 were not allowed to work (between 16 and 18 they could work a shorter working day and a week). The official propaganda always praised it as an accomplishment of socialism. Probably there is some common sense in it. But the debatable period was the one between 14 and 15 years of age. Especially, this concerned urban areas because in the rural areas parents involved their sons and daughters into job in their personal vegetable gardens and orchards anyway. Children mature physically and socially differently and some of them at this age are ready to work (not where the labor is hard) for a short time because it morally teaches them the value of the job, money and responsibility. Of course, it should be done with the permission of the board of education and physicians. In the 1970's and 1980's the Societ newspapers were full of articles telling about "healthy boxers type fifteen-year-olds who don't do anything, hang around, start smoking, drinking, hooliganing." Many parents were in favor of lifting or softening restrictions. At the end of the 1980's the regulations became more flexible. Children at the age of 14 are allowed to work for several hours a day in the place where their parents worked and could watch them, for example in their

private cafeteria. In urban areas the "summer camps of work and recreation" were open. For example, in May, 1993 the newspaper "Kuranty" advertised the "summer work and recreation camps" for teenagers of 14-16 years of age in the Moscow countryside, where children could work in the farm for 3-4 hours a day and have all kinds of recreational activities. The newspaper also informed that each school district in Moscow had a Learning-Industrial Center (Uchebnoproizvodstvennyi kombinat) which had facilities for teenagers' work and career guidance. Like many other formerly state funded educational institutions, Learning-Industrial centers are only partially subsidized from the state budget and get major funding from independent business activities.

There are different ways the young people are involved into business. Some of them are helped to do it by the local authorities, some do it on their own. In December, 1992 the teachers' newspaper "Uchitelskaya Gazeta" informed about the opening of a Business Center for young people which offers them opportunities to earn some money in Vorkuta, a mining city to the north of Moscow. In Tavda, Ekaterinburg Region, the municipal council opened the Youth Business Center, in Ryazan city one of the shops accepts craft pieces made by children at home for selling at the price fixed by teenagers. One also can see many teenagers in the streets offering car washing service or selling newspapers, doughnuts and Pepsi. The newspaper also spoke about the educators' concern that some children are too much preoccupied with making money, miss their classes and spend too much time after them in their business that it lowers their academic accomplishments.

The entrepreneural skills were not alien to some students when perestroika

and the faint beginnings of a marker economy came into the country. In the 1970-80's some school students did what was called "spekulyatsiya." It was an illegal private trade which grew under Brezhnev to enormous proportions into which more and more young people were involved (Smith, H., 1991). Some teenagers did "spekulyatsiya" even at school. The major items of trading were what made youth's pop sub-culture: American jeans and popular music discs which, as some people say, destroyed Communism quicker than the U.S. "Fantoms" and "Skyhawks."

Alongside with new forms of preparing young people for the future careers the old ones still exist enjoying the support of the state although it is very difficult in the present transitional chaotic period. For example, the chairman of the Committee on Education in St. Petersburg Oleg Lebedev informed in May, 1993 that "the city has managed to preserve 94.4 of all out-of-school educational institutions...which are attended by 115,000 children of the city (Lebedev, O., 1993). This is close to impossible because many previously totally subsidized by the government Palaces and Houses of Creativity, Palaces and Houses of Pioneers and School Children were children got some career guidance and could develop their talents are leased now to private businesses since the local school boards do not have enough money to run them.

The market relations involve changes int the system of training of labor force and offering jobs, which do not enjoy unanimous acceptance by the young specialists.

The vocational and training education in the former USSR was controlled by the USSR State Committee for Vocational and Training Education which merged in

1988 with two other educational ministries into the USSR State Committee for Public Education. These bodies developed curriculum and standards for vocational training programs. The regional and republican administrative bodies sent to the USSR State Planning Commission (Gosplan) the numbers of skilled workers for each particular branch of industry, trade, or agriculture. These projected needs were the basis for determining the number of vocational and technical schools and the number of students in them. At the end of the final academic year the students were given a limited choice of vacancies throughout the country which they were to choose and work at that place for three years (Gutek, G., 1993). Many of the graduates were critical about this system. For example, when it came to my graduation from Irkutsk Pedagogical Institute in Siberia in 1972 most of the teaching vacancies offered to us were in the remote rural areas while the graduates preferred to stay in the city of Irkutsk where the quality of life was higher. Many of us wanted to find the job by ourselves instead of being assigned a job by the Ministry of Education. Now the system that guaranteed jobs to all graduate is abolished (Gransden, A., 1993) and it turned out that many students are not ready to re-adjust from spoon-fed to active searches in the job market. Some graduates of vocational and technical colleges as well as of institutions of higher learning are scared that they may not be able to find any job and express a desire to return the old system when they were guaranteed of getting it. Since unemployment is a new phenomenon in the Russian Society many young people do not know how to handle it. Although there have been already created the employment security commissions, many young people feel unprepared to go there and declare

themselves unemployed. Some of them see it as something humiliating their dignity. Of course, the process of changes of their mentality is rather painful and it will take some time for Russian young people to acquire skills to live in a demand and supply system.

The transitory period of Russia toward market economy turns out to be rather thorny for some teenagers. The mass media express people's concern over the growth of child crime, number of gangs and their cruelties, early involvement of young girls into prostitution. The youngsters copy the methods of adult criminals. For example, those 12-14-agers who wash car windows in the streets have to pay 17-18-year-olds racketeers for the right to work on the most profitable traffic routes. Unfortunately, it's a sad price the society has to pay for the economic and sociaal reforms.

Conclusion

Today's Russia lives in a special transitionary period, when things are under changes and it suggests evaluatory criteria different from those which are used for evaluating stable social and economic systems. Many of the mass media, both in Russia (especially the Communist ones) and outside of it are full of negative assessments of the present historical times. One part of mine agrees with these statements because such facts as the decline of economy during the last recent years, rapid inflation, worsening of the living standards of some strata of population, general chaos, etc. are quite evident. The other part in me disagrees for several reasons. First of all, the market already functions in the country. In many respects the Russian free enterprise system is at the initial stage of its development which

Western capitalism *deja vu* long time ago. Of course, the Russian market has often ugly forms and is different from the American one, for example. But it exists and develops. Second, political situation after the victory of the President Yeltsyn in the referendum (April, 1993) is becoming more and more in favor of the free market. There is hardly any political party in the country that claims itself anti-market. One more important fact worth mentioning related to Yeltsyn's victory. In 1993, President B. Yeltsyn succeeded in accelerating the process of adopting a new Constitution which will create all legal foundations for the new economic system. Third, and very important too, the young people already experienced the taste of the free market; they like it, they are doing business, they want to do it, and learn how to do it. There are various opinions about Russia's young people's attitudes toward the market, but as many polls and surveys which grew in number in the country after they were allowed, show the majority of the youth are for the new life. I could not help sharing the opinion of one of the most respected economists both in Russia and in the world, N. Shmelev who concludes that "as a result of the last year's [1992] efforts and changes the economic reform has started at last. No matter what the price for it was but the most principle changes in our economic life are evident. At first, in the country which was on the brink of returning to the "stone age" - the time of natural exchange of products, money thanks to the price liberalization started working again. Second, the process of liberalization started...Third, and may be most important, the mentality of people, their attitude towards life started changing both at the top and at the grassroots of the society. In particular, the most socially active and influential part of our society - the core of the directors of the

enterprises - seems to have started liking the taste of the market and of self-management. And with this comes the understanding that the reforms are serious, that they will not be reversed no matter how surging, with hesitations and even stops the movement toward the market will be" (Shmelev, N., 1993).

One of the positive results of the last two intensive and most difficult years of becoming of the new market economy (1991-1992), from my point, is that the government and the President B. Yeltsyn include education and youth into their plans of radical Russia's renewal. The country preserved the old effective forms, structure, and institutions cleaning them off the Communist ideologies and practices and giving them new meaning. At the same time it's an exciting period of experimenting new ways of relating school and society, and teaching young people new democratic values and democratic way of life. The educators, although not all of them, getting rid of Communist ideological shackles fell free to bring innovations into schools, become more creative and willing to change education and the society. As one of the Russian teachers said to me, "life became harder but more interesting."

References

Adelman, D. (1992). *The "children of perestroika": Moscow teenagers talk about their lives and their future.* Armonk: M. E. Sharp, Inc.

_____. (1993). *Young people of Moscow talk about their life in the New Russia.* Armonk: M. E. Sharpe, Inc.

Belousov, R. (1993, May). Oni hotyat stat' bogatymi. *Novoye Russkoye Slovo., LXXXIV, 29*(309), p. 9.

Conquest, R. (1986). *The harvest of sorrow. The Soviet collectivization and the terror-famine.* New York: Oxford University Press.

Daniels, R. (1990). *The Stalin revolution. Foundations of the totalitarian era.* Lexington (Mass.): D. C. Heath and Company.

Dneprov, E. (1992, October). Glavnyi resurs razvitiya shkoly-svoboda. *Uchitelskay Gazeta, 33-36,* p. 7.

Gorbachev, M. (1987). *Perestroika.* New York: Harper & Row.

Gransden, G. (1993, April). Moscow State University strives to navigate its country's turbulent transition. *The Chronical of Higher Education, XXXIX*(34), A37.

Gutek, G. L. (1993). *American education in a global society: internationalizing teacher education.* New York: Longman.

Krupskaya, N. K. (1932). *"<Moyo> i <nashe>:,* M.: Politprosvetizdat.

Lebedev, O. (1993, May). Standart-nestandartnost. *Uchitelskaya Gazeta, 23-24,* p. 5.

Main Guidelines of the Reform of Secondary General and Vocational School (1984). M.: Pedagogika.

Ob ukreplenii svyazi shkoly s zhizn'yu i o dal'neishem razvitii systemy narodnogo obrazovaniya v SSSR (1958). M.: Politizdat.

O merah dal'neishego uluchsheniya raboty srednei obshcheobrazovatel'noi shkoly (1966). M.: Politizdat.

O zavershenii perehoda ko vseobshchemu srednemu obrazovaniyu molodyozhi i dalneishem razvitii obshcheobrazovatel'noi shkoly (1972). M.: Politizdat.

O dal'neishem sovershenstvovanii obucheniya, vospitaniya uchashchihsya obshcheobrazovatel'nyh shkol i podgotovki ih k trudu (1977). M.: Politizdat.

O shchedrom biznesmene i devochke Lene. (1993, May). *Kuranty, 101*(616), p. 5.

Public education in the USSR: Its development under perestroika of Soviet society. (1990). M.: The USSR State Committee for Public Education.

Shevardnadze, E. (1992). *Moi vybor.* M.: Novosti.

Shmelev, N. (1993). Reforms, common sense and morale. *Moscow News, 7,* p. 13.

Skatkin, M. N. (1978). *Voprosy politehnich-eskogo obucheniya v shkole.* M.: Pedagogika.

Smith, H. (1991). *The new Russians.* New York: Avon Books.

Sobkin, V. & Pisarsky, P. (1992). *Sotsiokul'turnyi analiz obrazovatel'noi situatsii v megapolise.* M.: Pedagogika.

The Law of the Russian Federation on Education. (1993). M.: Prosveshcheniye.

Vilenkin, N. Y., Chesnokov, A. S., & Shwarzburd, I. (1988). *Matematika. Uchebnik dlya 5 klassa.* M.: Prosveshcheniye.

Volkov, I. (1988). *Uchim tvorchestvu: Opyt raboty uchitelya truda i risovaniya shkoly no. 2 g. Reutova Moskovskoi oblasti.* M.: Novosti.

Yakovlev, A. (1992). *Obval*. M.: Prometei.

Yermolov, V. & Shulinsky, I. (1992, December). Gospodi, eto pro menya. . . *Uchitelskaya Gazeta, 49*, p. 10.